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SIPDIS

AF/S - HTREGER, NSC FOR COURVILLE

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SUBJECT: MOZAMBIQUE - PRESIDENT GUEBUZA GIVES AMBASSADOR

READOUT ON MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BUSH

Classified By: Ambassador Helen La Lime for Reason 1.4 (d)

1. (U) President Guebuza called the Ambassador to the Presidency on June 17 to brief her on his June 13 meeting, along with four other African heads of state, with President Bush. Guebuza was attended by Minister for Diplomatic Affairs Francisco Madeira and the Ambassador by Econ/Pol chief as notetaker.

2. (C) A smiling, relaxed Guebuza began his briefing by saying that he had a very agreeable trip to Washington. He said the President greeted him and others warmly, and was clearly very focused on Africa and sympathetic to the challenges Africans face. The President told them that he believed in following through on commitments, that the US had pledged to help Africa, and he assured them that the US would fulfill its promises. Guebuza expressed, several times, that the President's personable approach made a very positive impression.

3. (C) For their part, Guebuza continued, the heads of state raised with the President their concerns. They had agreed beforehand to divide the issues up among the countries, with peacekeeping being brought up by Niger's head of state, democracy by Namibia's, debt reduction by Ghana's. It fell to Guebuza to bring up the issue of assistance under the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) and the problem of drought. Guebuza said that he expressed a common worry about MCA eligibility criteria and conditions for qualifying for future funds (Note -- Mozambique is currently eligible for MCA funds). The President replied that he understood and would look into the matter.

4. (C) Guebuza then turned to his meeting with Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) head Paul Applegarth. At this juncture the Ambassador informed him that Applegarth had resigned on June 16. She reported that the press claimed he had done so because of criticism from some in Congress over the slowness of disbursing MCA funds. Both Guebuza and Madeira were visibly surprised and dismayed - it appeared they had not heard the news. Guebuza replied that his meeting with Applegarth had, in fact, gone very well, that Applegarth had gathered his MCC team together to meet him, and that Applegarth had been genuinely committed to moving ahead swiftly. Guebuza informed the Ambassador that the Mozambican government would provide both office space and a budget for a government team to work on the MCC program, and that the Ministry of Finance would provide a budget by the end of next week (June 24). He stressed that he was following closely progress toward an MCC compact.

5. (U) Guebuza ended the meeting by saying he was looking forward to his return visit to the US to attend the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) Business Summit in Baltimore on June 21 - 24. He warmly thanked the Ambassador for the Embassy's support on the CCA and to further strengthening bilateral ties. He added, though, that due to the fact that Mozambique's independence day anniversary falls on June 25, he would have to depart the CCA gathering early.  
La Lime